



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/678,636

10/06/2003

Peter Ernest Page

0730.0063C

7805

27896

7590

04/10/2006

EDELL, SHAPIRO & FINNAN, LLC
1901 RESEARCH BOULEVARD
SUITE 400
ROCKVILLE, MD 20850

EXAMINER

COY, NICOLE A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3672

DATE MAILED: 04/10/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/678,636	Applicant(s) PAGE ET AL.	
	Examiner Nicole Coy	Art Unit 3672	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 January 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-106 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-106 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. The Office action filed 1/26/06 has been received. Upon review, it has been recognized that an election/restriction should have been sent out in the previous office action. Therefore, the previous action has been vacated and the claims are subject to the following election/restriction. In addition, this action is made non-final.

Election/Restrictions

2. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
- I. Claims 1-91, drawn to a method and apparatus of suspending a well using a first and second barrier, classified in class 166, subclass 285.
 - II. Claim 92-106, drawn to a method of completing a sub-sea well, classified in class 166, subclass 360.
3. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:
- Inventions I and II are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different designs, modes of operation, and effects (MPEP § 802.01 and § 806.06). In the instant case, Group I is drawn to a method and apparatus of suspending a well using a first and a second barrier and Group II is drawn to a method of completing a sub-sea well using a christmas tree.

Art Unit: 3672

4. Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art in view of their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
5. If Group I is elected a further election of species is required. This application contains the following patentably distinct species:
 - I. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a cement plug;
 - II. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is an unperforated liner;
 - III. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a section of unperforated casing;
 - IV. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a liner top valve;
 - V. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a bridge plug;
 - VI. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a straddle;
 - VII. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is an expandable plug;
 - VIII. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a disappearing plug;
 - IX. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a rupture disk;
 - X. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is an inflatable plug packer;
 - XI. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a ball valve;
 - XII. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a flapper valve;
 - XIII. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a sliding sleeve;
 - XIV. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a pressure cycle plug;

- XV. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a wireline retrievable plug;
- XVI. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a formation isolation device;
- XVII. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a shear disc;
- XVIII. Wherein the first and/or second barrier/sealing means is a pump open device.

The species are independent or distinct because they are classified in different subclasses and require different searches.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, claims 1, 2, 4, 6-13, 15, 17-30, 32, 34-52, 54, 56-69, 71, 73-84, 86, 88-91.

Applicant is advised that a reply to this requirement must include an identification of the species that is elected consonant with this requirement, and a listing of all claims readable thereon, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of an allowable generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after

the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species.

MPEP § 809.02(a).

6. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions or species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions or species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C.103(a) of the other invention.

7. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim

Art Unit: 3672

remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nicole Coy whose telephone number is 571-272-5405. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00-5:30, 1st F off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Bagnell can be reached on 571-272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

nac


DAVID BAGNELL
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600